

Valley Needs More Federal Support to Get Clean Air the People Deserve

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This year, the Valley Air District commemorates its 30th year as a public health agency working to improve the health and quality of life for Valley residents. As Valley residents and members of the Valley Air District Governing Board, working to improve public health and quality of life for residents of the Valley is of the utmost importance to us.

Over the past 30 years, the San Joaquin Valley has made remarkable progress in cleaning the air through the implementation of innovative clean air strategies, reducing harmful smog-forming nitrogen oxide emissions from locally regulated sources by more than 93%.

From collaborative public/private investments of more than \$4.5 billion in new, cleaner passenger vehicles, agricultural equipment, heavy-duty trucks, and other technologies, to the most stringent control strategies for industrial, agricultural, and other sources, the Valley has served as a national model of clean air innovation.

Through this collective effort, the Valley now meets a number of federal health-based air quality standards, and Valley residents are breathing much cleaner air than ever.

As compared to even just a few years ago, it is gratifying and exciting to see so much conversation about how frequently the mountains surrounding the Valley can now clearly be seen.

We've Reached an Important Juncture in Healthy Air Effort

While considerable and undeniable progress has been made, it is clear that more must be done.

Due to our region's unique geographical and meteorological challenges, and, increasingly, changing climate conditions that exacerbate our challenges, the Valley continues to face major difficulties in meeting the latest air quality standards, and we are at an important juncture in our clean air journey.

The Valley Air District is committed to ongoing local clean air efforts, including fighting for, and making available, hundreds of millions of dollars in clean air grants, and continually enhancing strategies for reducing emissions from sources under local jurisdiction.

As one example of this ongoing work, just last year, the Governing board adopted the only-of-its-kind strategy for the virtual elimination of agricultural burning by the end of 2024, supported by \$180 million in new state funding to help offset the high cost of new alternatives such as chipping and soil incorporation.

However, to meet our region's clean air goals and federal requirements, it is clear that more must be done to address air pollution from mobile sources that now make up the majority of air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in the region.

Scaled-up investment is needed at the state and federal level to support an accelerated, transformational transition to new clean air and low-carbon vehicle and equipment technologies and mode shifts in the goods movement, transportation, agriculture, energy production, building, and other sectors.

In planning these transitions, community input and perspective will be critical to ensure equitable policies are pursued that assist—and do not leave behind—the Valley's many disadvantaged communities.

At the state level, the Governor and Legislature are committed to unprecedented clean air investments, and we urge strong allocation of these funds for investment in Valley communities and other regions with significant air quality challenges.

Take Advantage of Our Clean Air Grants

But, with federal mobile source emissions soon surpassing those under state jurisdiction, it will be imperative that the federal government partner with the Valley to equitably address sources of air pollution under its jurisdiction. This includes moving forward with new low-emission federal heavy-duty strategies, and prioritizing billions of dollars in new climate funding for clean vehicles/infrastructure, sustainable agriculture, and other new clean air and low carbon investment opportunities to regions facing the most difficult air quality challenges.

These focused federal investments and partnerships in the San Joaquin Valley will be essential to helping the Valley meet its clean air and public health goals, while also helping to improve the economic resilience of our region in a rapidly changing global economy.

We invite the public to learn about and support the Valley's clean air journey by visiting the Valley Air District's website at www.valleyair.org, signing up for email updates on activities, reading our latest annual report, and taking advantage of available clean air grant opportunities.

Zero-Emission Agricultural UTV Program Immensely Popular and Successful

By Brian German

Ag Net West, Mon., Aug. 15, 2022

On August 1, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District relaunched the Zero-Emission Ag Utility Terrain Vehicle (UTV) Voucher Program. The incentive program will cover up to 75 percent of the cost, up to \$13,5000, of new zero-emission equipment. President and CEO of Western Agricultural Processors Association, Roger Isom said the program has been immensely popular for producers looking to replace diesel or gasoline-powered equipment. The technology has also grown significantly in scope and ability, to provide farmers with viable replacement alternatives.

"We did a demonstration project with the Air Resources Board about 10 years ago, with the first generation of the electric ATVs. They were big. They were bulky with very little power, and they just didn't really work. They wouldn't even last a full eight hours. All of the new generation stuff out there is tremendous," said Isom. "These things work. They'll run a full eight-hour shift. They've got them now in a four-wheel drive with a 72-volt motor. They'll pull a little spray wagon. They'll pull another little bed full of parts and tools. It's incredibly effective now where the technology is."

Wishon Fire burning on Sequoia National Forest

By Associated Press

Recorder Online, Mon., Aug. 15, 2022

The Wishon Fire was burning in the Tule River Canyon in the Sequoia National Forest on Monday afternoon.

As of 4:45 p.m. Monday the fire had burned 200 acres. Smoke from the fire could be seen from Highway 190 rising above Success Lake.

Firefighters were responding to the fire in the Tule River Canyon near the stars on the Western Divide Ranger District in the Sequoia National Forest.

Sequoia National Forest Service, CAL FIRE and Tulare County Fire personnel were on the scene and as of Tuesday afternoon additional units were scheduled to arrive soon.

As of Monday afternoon there were no evacuations in place. Highway 190 was closed at the White Barn in Springville to keep people from driving into the steep canyon where the fire was located.

As of Monday afternoon power was also out east of Balch Park due to the fire. Doyle Springs, Camp Nelson, Pierpont and Ponderosa were all without power as of Monday afternoon.

An alert was sent out to residents in the area regarding the fire. Sequoia National Forest stated updates on the fire would be provided as information becomes available.